# THE AVENGERS

APPROVED BY THE COMICS CODE AUTHORITY

MARVEL COMICS GROUP

12¢

5 MAY

## "THE INVASION OF THE LAVA MEN!"

THE MIGHTY THOR

IRON MAN

CAPTAIN AMERICA and RICK JONES

GIANT-MAN AND THE WONDERFUL WASP

Also Featuring

THE INCREDIBLE HULK

# THE MIGHTY AVENGERS

## "The INVASION of The LAVA MEN!"

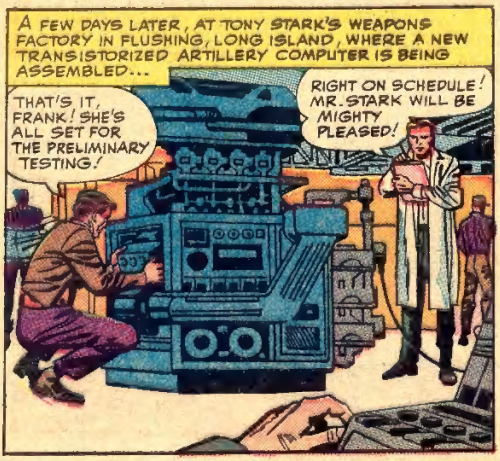
ANOTHER EPIC IN THE ANNALS OF THE STRONGEST SUPER-TEAM OF ALL! STARRING: THE MIGHTY THOR, IRON MAN, CAPTAIN AMERICA AND RICK JONES, GIANT-MAN AND THE WONDERFUL WASP!
AN ALL NEW SUPER-SAGA PRODUCED WITH PRIDE BY THE WORLD-FAMOUS MARVEL COMICS GROUP
AN EPIC TALE, TOLD WITH HIGH DRAMA AND HEROIC DIGNITY BY: STAN LEE
ILLUSTRATED WITH DEEP SINCERITY AND DAZZLING BEAUTY BY: JACK KIRBY
INKED BY: PAUL REINMAN LETTERED BY: S.ROSEN
X-652

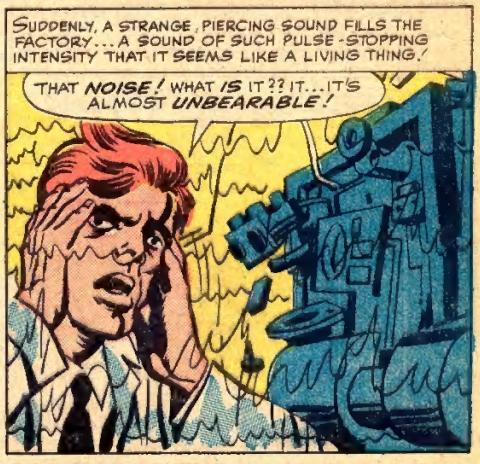
IN THE UNFORGETTABLE FANTASTIC FOUR #26 WE SAW THE SENSATIONAL BATTLE BETWEEN THE HULK AND THE THING... A BATTLE LATER JOINED BY THE MIGHTY AVENGERS! BUT ALL THINGS MUST END AND SO, WITH THE DISAPPEARANCE OF THE HULK, THE AVENGERS RETURN TO THEIR MEETING PLACE TO INSPECT THE DAMAGE...
WELL, THERE'S NOT MUCH MORE WE CAN DO HERE! WE'LL HAVE TO CALL A CONSTRUCTION CREW TO PUT ANTHONY STARK'S HOME IN ORDER AGAIN!
I SUGGEST WE DISBAND FOR NOW! WE ALL HAVE PERSONAL MATTERS TO ATTEND TO!
CONSIDERING THE FIGHT THE HULK PUT UP, IT'S A WONDER THE HOUSE WASN'T DAMAGED EVEN WORSE!
I'M TOO TIRED TO WALK, JAN! LET'S SHRINK DOWN AND I'LL SUMMON MY FLYING ANTS!
YOU'VE GOT IT MADE, BIG BOY! YOU RIDE YOUR ANTS, WHILE I HAVE TO FLY BY MYSELF!
AS EACH TAKES A SHRINKING CAPSULE, GIANT-MAN AND THE WASP SEEM TO SUDDENLY FADE FROM SIGHT!
WELL, BIG FELLA, IT WAS A GOOD FIGHT WHILE IT LASTED, AND... HOLY SMOKE! WHERE'D HE GO?
C'MON, DOLL! I'LL RACE YOU TO THE LAB! START FLAPPIN' THOSE WINGS, HONEY!
AT LEAST YOU COULD GIVE YOUR LITTLE WASP A HEAD START!
STAND BACK, MY FRIENDS! THE TIME HAS COME FOR MY DEPARTURE!
BUT SHOULD THE NEED ARISE, MY ENCHANTED HAMMER AND MYSELF ARE AT YOUR BECK AND CALL, AS EVER!
NOW TO RETURN TO THE HEART OF THE CITY, AND RESUME MY MORTAL GUISE AS DR. DON BLAKE, PRACTICING PHYSICIAN!
2.

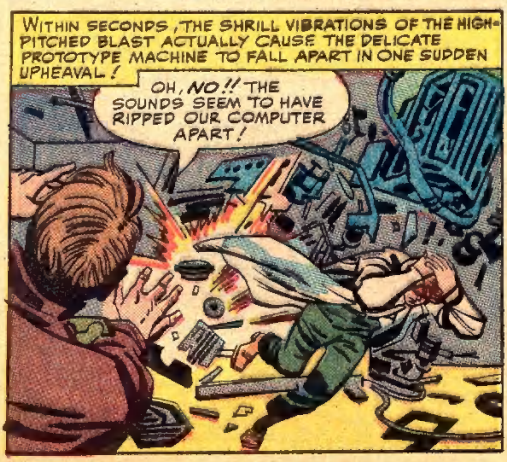
IT WAS A PLEASURE TO FIGHT SHOULDER TO SHOULDER WITH YOU, CAPTAIN AMERICA! WE ARE PROUD TO NUMBER YOU AMONG THE AVENGERS...
PROUD THAT YOU CHOSE TO JOIN US!*
I COULD NOT HAVE SELECTED A FINER FIGHTING GROUP! MY SKILL AND MY SHIELD ARE YOURS, WHENEVER YOU NEED THEM! REMEMBER THAT, IRON MAN!
*SEE THE AVENGERS #4 - EDITOR.

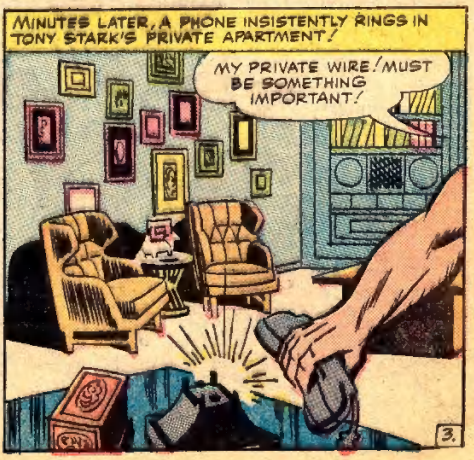
SINCE THE HULK TURNED AGAINST US... AND AGAINST HIS OWN ALLY, RICK JONES, IT'S LUCKY THAT THE BOY FOUND A FRIEND LIKE CAPTAIN AMERICA!
REMEMBER THOSE ACROBATIC TRICKS I PROMISED TO TEACH YOU, RICK? THIS IS AS GOOD A TIME AS ANY!
THAT'S GREAT, CAP!

A FINE THING! THE MILLIONAIRE INDUSTRIALIST, TONY STARK, LETS THE AVENGERS USE HIS NEW YORK MANSION FOR THEIR MEETING PLACE... AND I'M THE ONLY ONE LEFT TO FIX THE PLACE UP NOW! I WONDER IF THE AVENGERS SUSPECT THAT IRON-MAN REALLY IS LOVABLE OL' TONY STARK!?


A FEW DAYS LATER, AT TONY STARK'S WEAPONS FACTORY IN FLUSHING, LONG ISLAND, WHERE A NEW TRANSISTORIZED ARTILLERY COMPUTER IS BEING ASSEMBLED...
THAT'S IT, FRANK! SHE'S ALL SET FOR THE PRELIMINARY TESTING!
RIGHT ON SCHEDULE! MR. STARK WILL BE MIGHTY PLEASED!

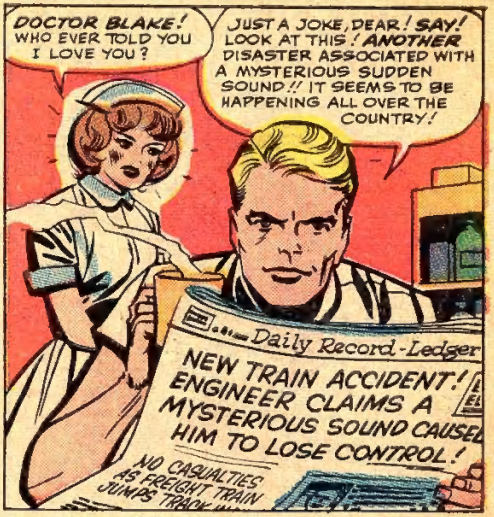

SUDDENLY, A STRANGE, PIERCING SOUND FILLS THE FACTORY... A SOUND OF SUCH PULSE-STOPPING INTENSITY THAT IT SEEMS LIKE A LIVING THING!
THAT NOISE! WHAT IS IT?? IT... IT'S ALMOST UNBEARABLE!


WITHIN SECONDS, THE SHRILL VIBRATIONS OF THE HIGH-PITCHED BLAST ACTUALLY CAUSE THE DELICATE PROTOTYPE MACHINE TO FALL APART IN ONE SUDDEN UPHEAVAL!
OH, NO!! THE SOUNDS SEEM TO HAVE RIPPED OUR COMPUTER APART!


MINUTES LATER, A PHONE INSISTENTLY RINGS IN TONY STARK'S PRIVATE APARTMENT!
MY PRIVATE WIRE! MUST BE SOMETHING IMPORTANT!
3.

WHAT?? YOU SAY A MYSTERIOUS NOISE CAUSED ALL THAT DAMAGE?! I'LL BE RIGHT THERE! IN THE MEANTIME, ITEMIZE THE COST OF REPLACEMENT AND DON'T TOUCH A THING UNTIL I ARRIVE!
AND THEN, THE MILLIONAIRE PLAYBOY INDUSTRIALIST CONNECTS A CAREFULLY INSULATED WIRE FROM A DEVICE WHICH NEVER LEAVES HIS CHEST TO THE NEAREST WALL OUTLET...
HOW IRONIC IT IS! I'M THE ENVY OF MILLIONS, BECAUSE OF MY WEALTH AND MY ALLEGED GOOD LOOKS/ THERE'S HARDLY A MAN ON EARTH WHO WOULDN'T WANT TO BE IN MY SHOES!
BUT HOW MANY WOULD STILL FEEL THAT WAY IF THEY KNEW THAT MY LIFE WILL LAST ONLY AS LONG AS THIS CHEST DEVICE KEEPS MY HEART BEATING?! IF THEY KNEW THAT I LIVE EVERY MOMENT WITH THE THREAT OF SUDDEN DEATH DUE TO THE PIECE OF SHRAPNEL LODGED IN MY HEART!
BUT LET US LEAVE TONY STARK ALONE WITH HIS SOBER THOUGHTS, AS WE TURN OUR ATTENTION TO ANT-MAN AND THE WASP WHO ARE ENGAGED IN A RESEARCH PROJECT DEEP WITHIN A THRIVING ANT HILL...
HAVE YOU FOUND WHAT YOU'RE LOOKING FOR YET, HANK? THIS PLACE IS TOO DRY FOR MY DELICATE COMPLEXION!
JUST A LITTLE LONGER, JAN! I'M INTERESTED IN OBSERVING THE ACTION OF THESE ISOTOPES WHICH CANNOT BE STUDIED BY ANY OTHER METHOD!
AND THEN, UNEXPECTEDLY, WITH NERVE-SHATTERING IMPACT, THE SAME MYSTERIOUS SOUND WHICH ROCKED TONY STARK'S FACTORY IS HEARD IN THE DEPTHS OF THE TINY ANT HILL!!
HENRY! THAT SOUND!! WHA... WHAT IS IT?? IT'S THE MOST UNEARTHLY THING I'VE EVER HEARD!!
I DON'T KNOW, JAN!...BUT LOOK HOW IT'S AFFECTING THE ANTS! IT'S DRIVING THEM FROM THE ANT HILL!
JAN! THE VIBRATIONS ARE MAKING THE ENTIRE HILL CAVE IN! WE'VE GOT TO GET OUT! FOLLOW ME!
JUST LEAD THE WAY, BLUE EYES! I'M RIGHT BEHIND YOU!
SECONDS LATER...
WE MADE IT! ARE YOU ALL RIGHT, HONEY?
I'M AS ALL RIGHT AS ANY GIRL COULD BE WHO HAD ALL HER MAKE-UP SMUDGED BY A SILLY OL' COLLAPSING ANT HILL!
NEVER MIND THAT, JAN! OUR BIG PROBLEM IS TO LEARN THE SECRET OF THAT STRANGE SOUND!
4

A SHORT TIME LATER, IN THE MEDICAL OFFICE OF DR. DON BLAKE...
I BROUGHT YOU YOUR LUNCH AND A NEWSPAPER, DOCTOR! YOU'VE JUST GOT TO TAKE TIME OUT FOR YOUR MEALS!
NOW, JANE...WOULD YOU LOVE ME AS MUCH IF I WERE FAT AND GLUTTONOUS?

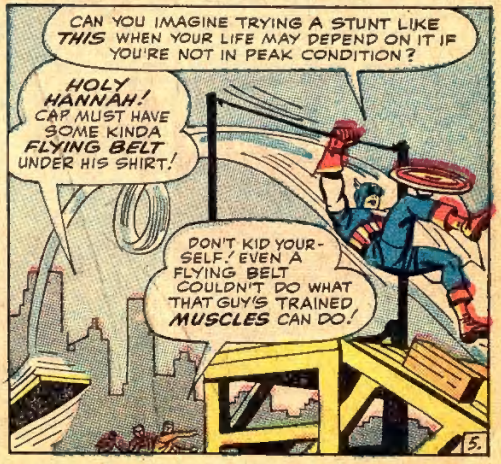

DOCTOR BLAKE! WHO EVER TOLD YOU I LOVE YOU?
JUST A JOKE, DEAR! SAY! LOOK AT THIS! ANOTHER DISASTER ASSOCIATED WITH A MYSTERIOUS SUDDEN SOUND!! IT SEEMS TO BE HAPPENING ALL OVER THE COUNTRY!
Daily Record-Ledger
NEW TRAIN ACCIDENT! ENGINEER CLAIMS A MYSTERIOUS SOUND CAUSED HIM TO LOSE CONTROL!
NO CASUALTIES AS FREIGHT TRAIN JUMPS TRACK

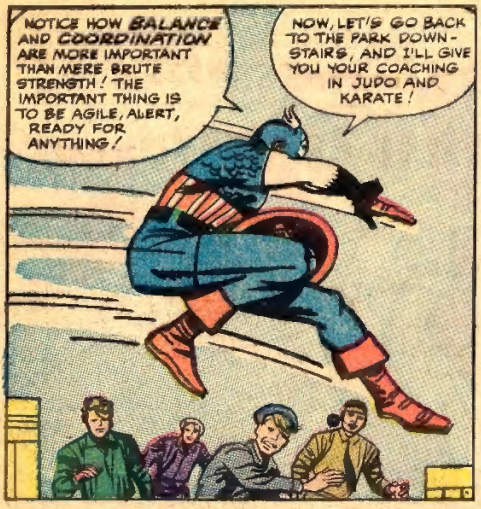
THEN, AS SOON AS HIS NURSE HAS RETURNED TO THE OUTER OFFICE, THE SLENDER LAME DOCTOR RUSHES TO THE ROOF OF HIS BUILDING...
THERE CAN BE NO FURTHER DELAY! IT IS TIME TO SUMMON THE AVENGERS!!

BUT I CANNOT SUMMON THE STRONGEST TEAM OF SUPER-HEROES ON EARTH IN THE IDENTITY OF DON BLAKE!

AND SO, WITH ONE STRIKE OF MY CANE UPON THE SURFACE BENEATH, I AM TRANSFORMED TO THE MIGHTY THOR!!

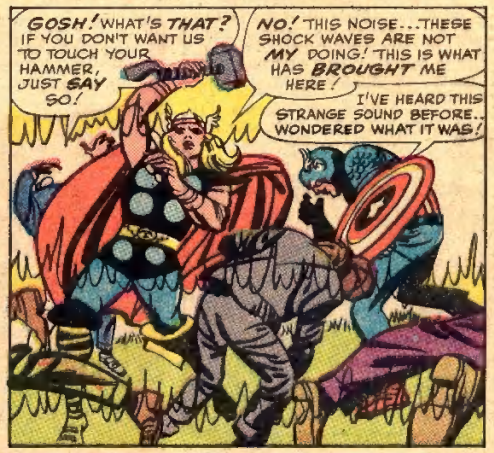
BUT ONCE AGAIN WE SHIFT OUR SCENE...THIS TIME TO ANOTHER ROOFTOP, WHERE WE FIND THE COLORFUL CAPTAIN AMERICA GIVING AN ACROBATIC EXHIBITION TO RICK JONES AND MEMBERS OF HIS TEEN BRIGADE...
AND NOW I'LL SHOW YOU WHY IT'S SO VITALLY IMPORTANT TO EAT THE RIGHT FOODS AND GET PLENTY OF EXERCISE AND EIGHT HOURS OF SLEEP!
WHAT'S HE GONNA DO NOW?
I DON'T KNOW! ...BUT I BET IT'LL BE A DOOZY!


CAN YOU IMAGINE TRYING A STUNT LIKE THIS WHEN YOUR LIFE MAY DEPEND ON IT IF YOU'RE NOT IN PEAK CONDITION?
HOLY HANNAH! CAP MUST HAVE SOME KINDA FLYING BELT UNDER HIS SHIRT!
DON'T KID YOURSELF! EVEN A FLYING BELT COULDN'T DO WHAT THAT GUY'S TRAINED MUSCLES CAN DO!
5.


NOTICE HOW BALANCE AND COORDINATION ARE MORE IMPORTANT THAN MERE BRUTE STRENGTH! THE IMPORTANT THING IS TO BE AGILE, ALERT, READY FOR ANYTHING!
NOW, LET'S GO BACK TO THE PARK DOWN-STAIRS, AND I'LL GIVE YOU YOUR COACHING IN JUDO AND KARATE!

BUT, NO SOONER DOES CAPTAIN AMERICA REACH THEIR TRAINING AREA, WHEN...
I HOPED I'D FIND YOU HERE! THE AVENGERS MAY SOON HAVE NEED FOR YOUR SKILLS!!
THOR! YOU SURE HAVE A DRAMATIC WAY OF MAKING AN APPEARANCE, FELLA!

WOW! IS THIS SOMETHIN'! FIRST CAPTAIN AMERICA, AND NOW THOR!
WAIT'LL I TELL MY DAD THAT I ACTUALLY TOUCHED YOUR HAMMER!
C'MON, GIVE SOMEONE ELSE A CHANCE! I'M NEXT!


GOSH! WHAT'S THAT? IF YOU DON'T WANT US TO TOUCH YOUR HAMMER, JUST SAY SO!
NO! THIS NOISE...THESE SHOCK WAVES ARE NOT MY DOING! THIS IS WHAT HAS BROUGHT ME HERE!
I'VE HEARD THIS STRANGE SOUND BEFORE.. WONDERED WHAT IT WAS!

SUDDENLY, THE EAR-SHATTERING TRILL REACHES ITS PEAK, SPLINTERING A NEARBY TREE JUST AS A SINGER'S HIGH NOTE MAY SOMETIMES SHATTER A GLASS!
CRACK!

WHOEVER IS RESPONSIBLE FOR THAT STARTLING SOUND HAS TOO MUCH POWER TO BE ALLOWED TO MENACE MANKIND! THERE'S NO TELLING WHAT DAMAGE WILL BE DONE NEXT!
THAT IS WHY I HAVE COME FOR YOU! NOW I MUST SUMMON THE OTHERS!

IT IS TIME FOR THE AVENGERS TO MEET!
WAIT HERE, LADS, AND CONTINUE YOUR PRACTICE! I'LL TAKE RICK WITH ME!
GOSH! HOW LUCKY CAN HE BE!? IMAGINE GOING TO A MEETING OF THE AVENGERS!
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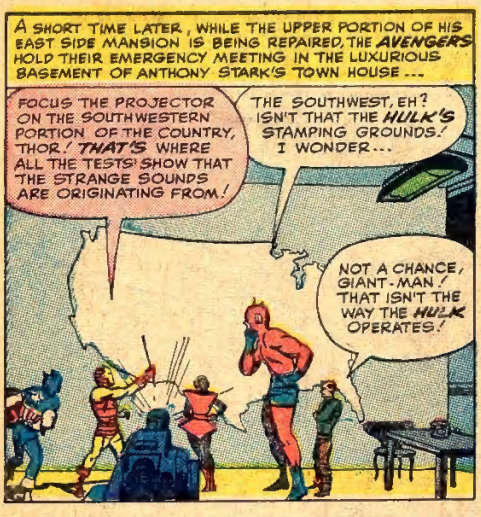

A SHORT TIME LATER, WHILE THE UPPER PORTION OF HIS EAST SIDE MANSION IS BEING REPAIRED, THE AVENGERS HOLD THEIR EMERGENCY MEETING IN THE LUXURIOUS BASEMENT OF ANTHONY STARK'S TOWN HOUSE ...
FOCUS THE PROJECTOR ON THE SOUTHWESTERN PORTION OF THE COUNTRY, THOR! THAT'S WHERE ALL THE TESTS SHOW THAT THE STRANGE SOUNDS ARE ORIGINATING FROM!
THE SOUTHWEST, EH? ISN'T THAT THE HULK'S STAMPING GROUNDS! I WONDER...
NOT A CHANCE, GIANT-MAN! THAT ISN'T THE WAY THE HULK OPERATES!

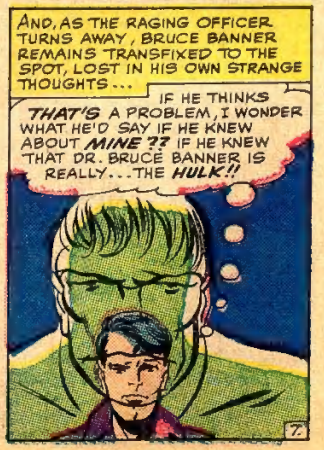
AT THAT VERY MOMENT, AT A HEAVILY GUARDED MISSILE INSTALLATION IN THE VERY PART OF THE COUNTRY WHICH THE AVENGERS ARE DISCUSSING...
HOLY HANNAH! WHAT'S THAT?!
I DON'T KNOW! FIRST THAT STRANGE NOISE, AND NOW... A HILL SEEMS TO BE GROWING RIGHT OUT FROM UNDER OUR FEET!

GENERAL ROSS! THERE SEEMS TO BE A DISTURBANCE IN SECTOR THREE, SIR!
DISTURBANCE! IT'S MORE THAN THAT! THERE'S A GOL-DURNED MOUNTAIN POPPING UP RIGHT NEAR MY LAUNCHING SITE!! GET RID OF IT!
Y-YES, SIR! BUT HOW DO YOU GET RID OF A MOUNTAIN?!
WHAT CAUSED IT IN THE FIRST PLACE??

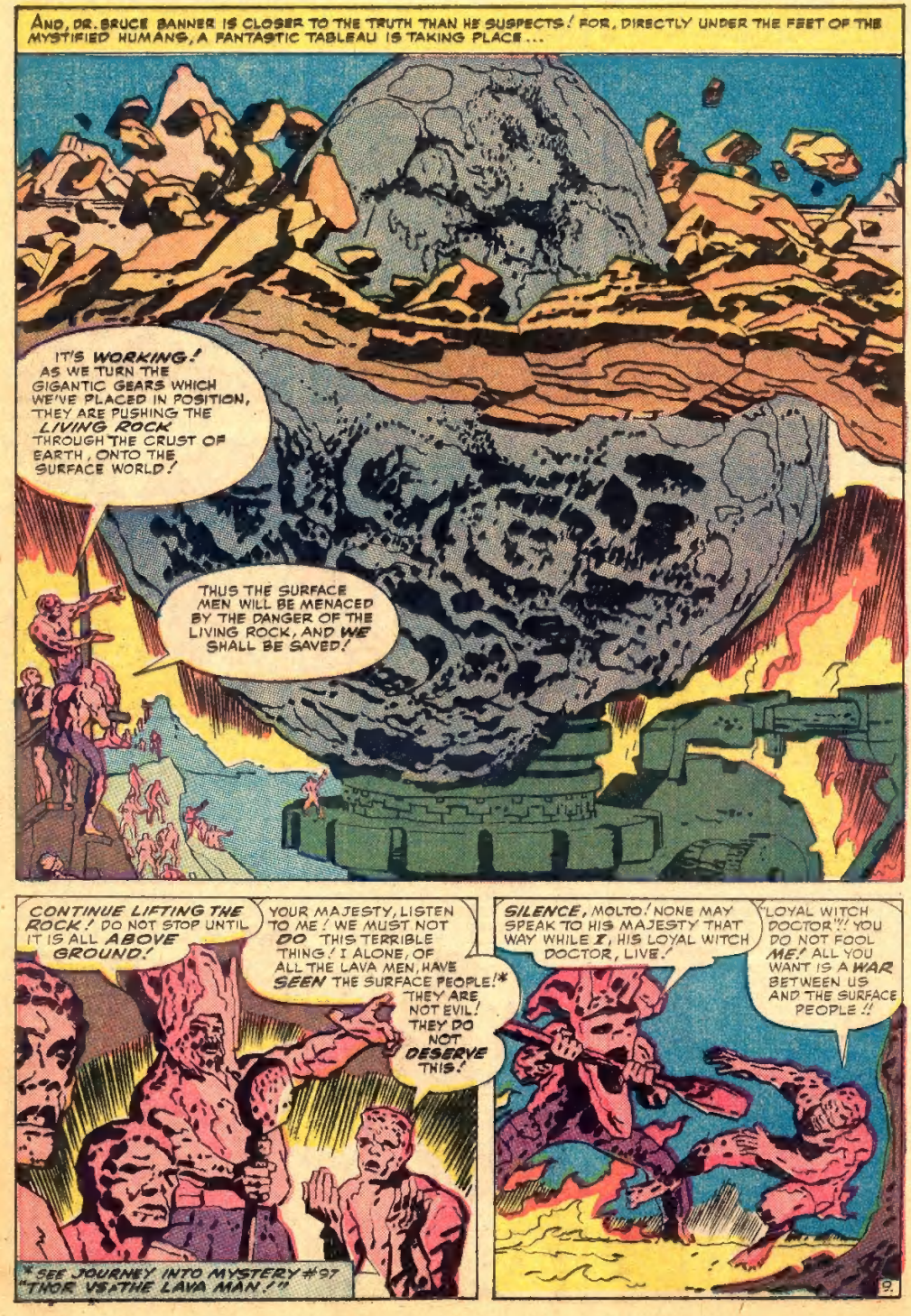
SUDDENLY, AN INTERRUPTION OCCURS AS GENERAL "THUNDERBOLT" ROSS'S DAUGHTER, BETTY, APPROACHES WITH A SLIM, TENSE-LOOKING YOUNG MAN...
DAD! LOOK WHO I FOUND! IT'S BRUCE BANNER! HE'S COME BACK!
BANNER! I DIDN'T THINK YOU'D HAVE THE NERVE TO SHOW YOUR FACE HERE AFTER THE WAY YOU DISAPPEARED MONTHS AGO IN THE MIDDLE OF A VITAL ATOMIC TEST!

IF YOU WERE UNDER MY COMMAND, INSTEAD OF BEING A CIVILIAN SCIENTIST, I'D SLAP YOU IN THE GUARD-HOUSE AS SOON AS LOOK AT YOU! WHAT MY DAUGHTER CAN SEE IN A WEAK-KNEED, LILY-LIVERED, MILKSOP LIKE YOU... !!!
DAD, PLEASE! BRUCE SAID HE'S BEEN ILL! THAT'S WHY WE HAVEN'T SEEN HIM! BUT HE'S BETTER NOW!

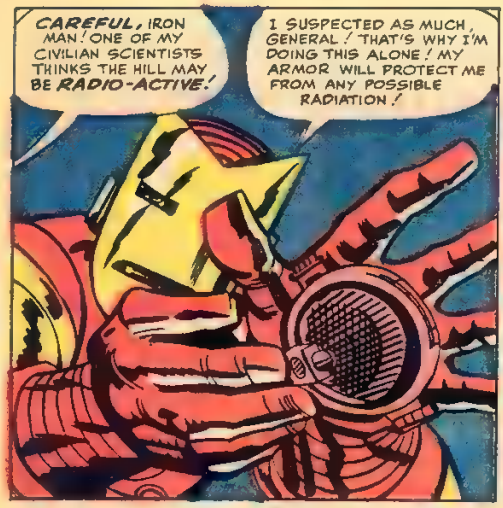
WELL, WE'LL FINISH DISCUSSING BANNER SOME OTHER TIME! RIGHT NOW, I'VE GOT A MORE IMPORTANT PROBLEM ON MY HANDS!! LOOK! LOOK AT THAT.. THAT MOVING HILL GROWING FROM OUT OF NOWHERE... RIGHT NEAR MY LAUNCHING SITE!!


AND, AS THE RAGING OFFICER TURNS AWAY, BRUCE BANNER REMAINS TRANSFIXED TO THE SPOT, LOST IN HIS OWN STRANGE THOUGHTS...
IF HE THINKS THAT'S A PROBLEM, I WONDER WHAT HE'D SAY IF HE KNEW ABOUT MINE?? IF HE KNEW THAT DR. BRUCE BANNER IS REALLY... THE HULK!!

"CAN I EVER FORGET THAT AWESOME MOMENT, MANY MONTHS AGO, WHEN I WAS STRUCK BY MY OWN GAMMA RAY BOMB WHILE TRYING TO SAVE THE LIFE OF RICK JONES, A BOY WHO HAD WANDERED ONTO THE POST DURING THE BOMB TEST..."
"BY SOME MIRACULOUS QUIRK OF FATE THE GAMMA RAYS DIDN'T KILL ME...ALTHOUGH IT MIGHT HAVE BEEN BETTER IF THEY HAD! INSTEAD, THEY CHANGED ME... TURNED ME INTO THE UNBELIEVABLY POWERFUL HULK!"
I'LL STAY WITH HULK! I'LL NEVER FORGET THAT YOU SAVED MY LIFE!
"AS THE HULK, MY STRENGTH IS VIRTUALLY LIMITLESS! EVEN MY LEG MUSCLES ARE SO POWERFUL THAT BY MERELY LEAPING INTO THE AIR, I CAN JUMP VAST DISTANCES, AS THOUGH I'M FLYING!"
"BUT, WITH MY BRUTISH STRENGTH, THERE IS YET ANOTHER CHANGE!" MY PERSONALITY CHANGES, TOO! THE HULK WANTS TO FIGHT, TO LASH OUT AT THE WORLD WHICH DOESN'T UNDERSTAND HIM! AS THE HULK, I BECOME A MENACE, EVEN SEEKING TO HARM THE AVENGERS, WHO HAVE TRIED TO MAKE ME THEIR ALLY!
I'VE BECOME A MODERN DAY JEKYLL AND HYDE! I CHANGE FROM BANNER TO THE HULK, NEVER KNOWING WHEN THE NEXT CHANGE WILL TAKE PLACE...NEVER DARING TO... HUH?
STOP DAYDREAMING AND MAKE YOURSELF USEFUL, BANNER! YOU'RE A SCIENTIST! WHAT DO YOU MAKE OF THAT CONFOUNDED GROWING HILL???
OH, BRUCE... PLEASE TRY TO SOLVE THE MYSTERY FOR MY FATHER! PERHAPS IT WILL MAKE HIM FEEL DIFFERENTLY ABOUT YOU... ABOUT US!
I'LL TRY, BETTY! BUT, I DON'T KNOW WHAT I CAN DO! I-I'M STILL A LITTLE CONFUSED!
THIS IS MORE THAN JUST A SIMPLE HILL! IT SEEMS TO BE COMPOSED OF A TYPE OF SUBSTANCE I'VE NEVER SEEN BEFORE! IT LOOKS AS THOUGH IT'S BEING PUSHED UP FROM THE GROUND BY SOME MIGHTY FORCE!

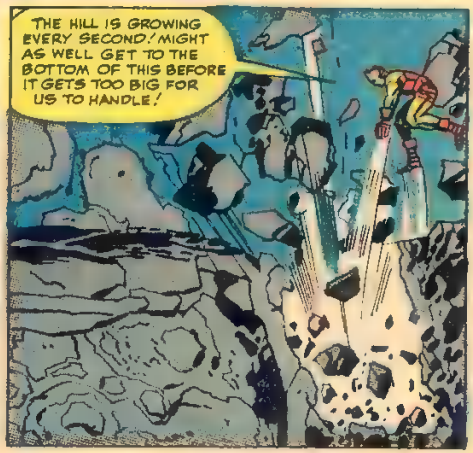

AND, DR. BRUCE BANNER IS CLOSER TO THE TRUTH THAN HE SUSPECTS! FOR, DIRECTLY UNDER THE FEET OF THE MYSTIFIED HUMANS, A FANTASTIC TABLEAU IS TAKING PLACE...
IT'S WORKING! AS WE TURN THE GIGANTIC GEARS WHICH WE'VE PLACED IN POSITION, THEY ARE PUSHING THE LIVING ROCK THROUGH THE CRUST OF EARTH, ONTO THE SURFACE WORLD!
THUS THE SURFACE MEN WILL BE MENACED BY THE DANGER OF THE LIVING ROCK, AND WE SHALL BE SAVED!
CONTINUE LIFTING THE ROCK! DO NOT STOP UNTIL IT IS ALL ABOVE GROUND!
YOUR MAJESTY, LISTEN TO ME! WE MUST NOT DO THIS TERRIBLE THING! I ALONE, OF ALL THE LAVA MEN, HAVE SEEN THE SURFACE PEOPLE! THEY ARE NOT EVIL! THEY DO NOT DESERVE THIS!
* SEE JOURNEY INTO MYSTERY #97 "THOR VS. THE LAVA MAN!"
SILENCE, MOLTO! NONE MAY SPEAK TO HIS MAJESTY THAT WAY WHILE I, HIS LOYAL WITCH DOCTOR, LIVE!
"LOYAL WITCH DOCTOR"!! YOU DO NOT FOOL ME! ALL YOU WANT IS A WAR BETWEEN US AND THE SURFACE PEOPLE!!
9.

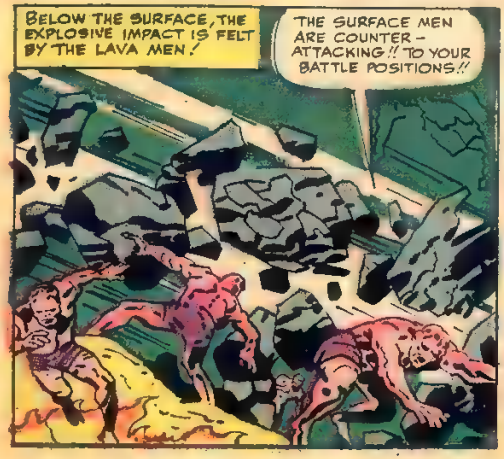
DO NOT LISTEN TO HIM, YOUR MAJESTY! THE WITCH DOCTOR FEEDS YOU LIES! THE SURFACE MEN WOULD HELP US IF WE ASK THEM! WE MUST NOT FORCE THE LIVING ROCK UPON THEM!
YOU ARE A COWARD, MOLTO! WHEN WE SENT YOU TO THE SURFACE MONTHS AGO, YOU WERE DEFEATED BY ONE NAMED THOR! NOW YOU FEAR THEM ALL!!
ENOUGH! MY DECISION IS MADE! KEEP RAISING THE ROCK!
AND, BACK ON THE SURFACE AGAIN...
WE CAN'T AFFORD TO TAKE ANY CHANCES! BANNER TELLS ME HE SUSPECTS THAT THING IS RADIO-ACTIVE!! WE'LL RING IT WITH MISSILES!
THEN, UNEXPECTEDLY...
GENERAL, LOOK! A HELICOPTER! IT'S NOT ONE OF OURS!!
THIS IS OFF-LIMITS TO ANY CIVILIAN CRAFT! I'LL HAVE THEIR HIDES!!
NO, WAIT!! CAPTAIN, DON'T YOU RECOGNIZE THAT SHIP? IT HAS PRIORITY A-1 CLEARANCE TO LAND ANY[redacted]!!
IT'S THE AVENGERS! NOW WE'LL GET SOME RESULTS AROUND HERE!!
THERE'S THE GROWING HILL WE HEARD ABOUT IN THE REPORTS!
IT MUST BE THE SOURCE OF THE MYSTERIOUS SOUNDS!! STAY BACK! ... I'LL INVESTIGATE FIRST!
WAIT! WHAT ABOUT THE REST OF US??
YOU HEARD THE MAN, RICK! WE DON'T QUESTION EACH OTHER'S COMMANDS! IRON MAN MUST HAVE HIS REASONS!

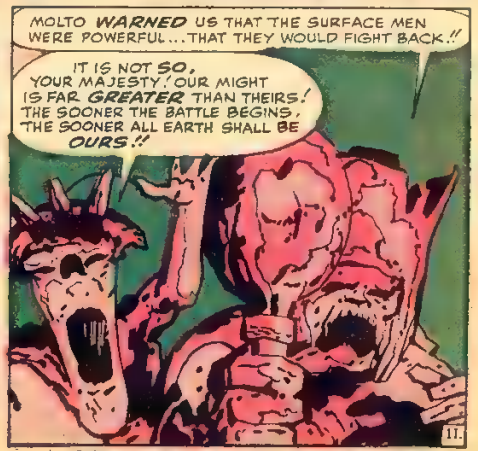

CAREFUL, IRON MAN! ONE OF MY CIVILIAN SCIENTISTS THINKS THE HILL MAY BE RADIO-ACTIVE!
I SUSPECTED AS MUCH, GENERAL! THAT'S WHY I'M DOING THIS ALONE! MY ARMOR WILL PROTECT ME FROM ANY POSSIBLE RADIATION!

THERE!! BY SETTING MY REPULSER TRANSISTORS TO THE HIGHEST INTENSITY, I SHOULD BE ABLE TO BLAST THROUGH THE OUTER LAYER AND SEE WHAT'S BENEATH!

IRON MAN! LOOK! IT ISN'T RADIO-ACTIVE! BUT IT'S EVEN MORE FANTASTIC! IT LOOKS AS THOUGH IT'S ALIVE!
BACK, CAP! I'M NOT FINISHED! I'LL GIVE IT ANOTHER BLAST!!





BELOW THE SURFACE, THE EXPLOSIVE IMPACT IS FELT BY THE LAVA MEN!
THE SURFACE MEN ARE COUNTER-ATTACKING!! TO YOUR BATTLE POSITIONS!!


MOLTO WARNED US THAT THE SURFACE MEN WERE POWERFUL... THAT THEY WOULD FIGHT BACK!!
IT IS NOT SO, YOUR MAJESTY! OUR MIGHT IS FAR GREATER THAN THEIRS! THE SOONER THE BATTLE BEGINS, THE SOONER ALL EARTH SHALL BE OURS!!
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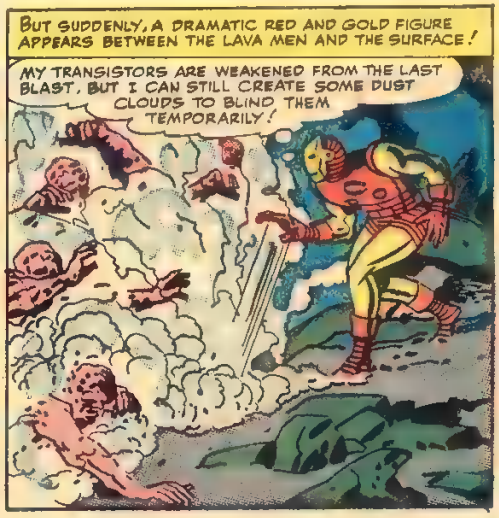
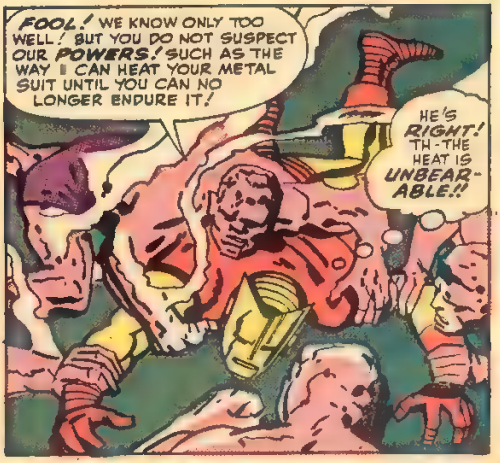
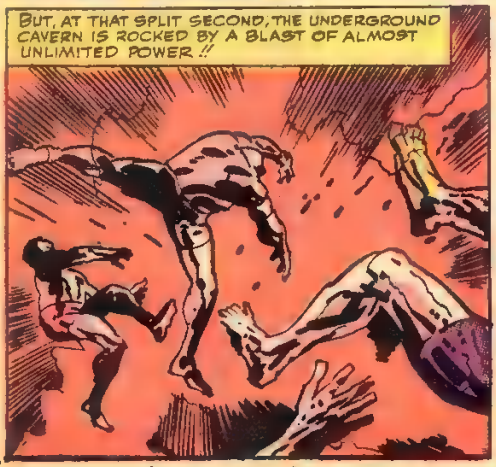
CONTINUED AFTER NEXT PAGE...

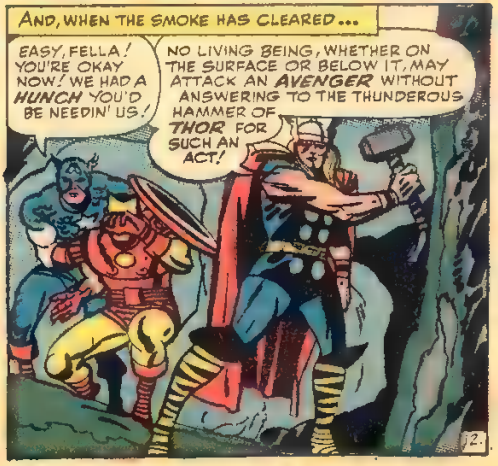
THEN, THE DETERMINED KING ISSUES A MOMENTOUS COMMAND TO HIS SUBTERRANEAN FORCES ...
THE TIME HAS COME! TO THE SURFACE! ATTACK!!
THE OPENING IS BEFORE US! I CAN [redacted] THE LIGHT OF DAY! AFTER ALL THESE CENTURIES!!
THE SURFACE SHALL BE OURS! NOTHING CAN STOP US!!

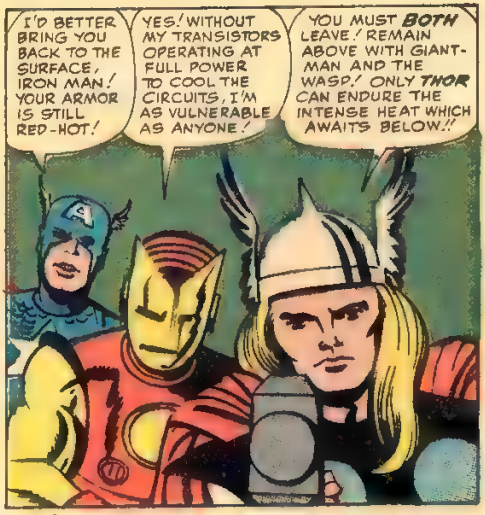

BUT SUDDENLY, A DRAMATIC RED AND GOLD FIGURE APPEARS BETWEEN THE LAVA MEN AND THE SURFACE!
MY TRANSISTORS ARE WEAKENED FROM THE LAST BLAST, BUT I CAN STILL CREATE SOME DUST CLOUDS TO BLIND THEM TEMPORARILY!

HE IS ALONE! HE CANNOT STOP US! DESTROY HIM!
WAIT! I WANT TO TALK TO YOU! YOU'RE JUST A HANDFUL OF UNARMED INVADERS! YOU DON'T KNOW WHAT YOU'LL BE FACING UP ABOVE!


FOOL! WE KNOW ONLY TOO WELL! BUT YOU DO NOT SUSPECT OUR POWERS! SUCH AS THE WAY I CAN HEAT YOUR METAL SUIT UNTIL YOU CAN NO LONGER ENDURE IT!
HE'S RIGHT! TH-THE HEAT IS UNBEARABLE!!

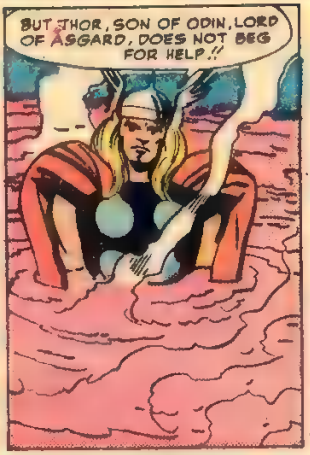

BUT, AT THAT SPLIT SECOND, THE UNDERGROUND CAVERN IS ROCKED BY A BLAST OF ALMOST UNLIMITED POWER!!


AND, WHEN THE SMOKE HAS CLEARED ...
EASY, FELLA! YOU'RE OKAY NOW! WE HAD A HUNCH YOU'D BE NEEDIN' US!
NO LIVING BEING, WHETHER ON THE SURFACE OR BELOW IT, MAY ATTACK AN AVENGER WITHOUT ANSWERING TO THE THUNDEROUS HAMMER OF THOR FOR SUCH AN ACT!

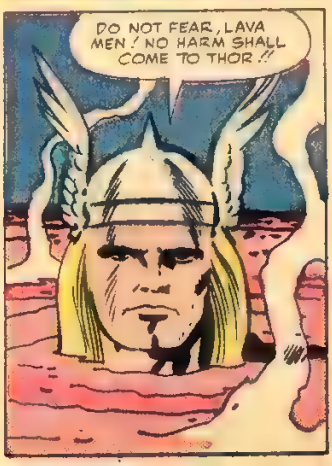

I'D BETTER BRING YOU BACK TO THE SURFACE, IRON MAN! YOUR ARMOR IS STILL RED-HOT!
YES! WITHOUT MY TRANSISTORS OPERATING AT FULL POWER TO COOL THE CIRCUITS, I'M AS VULNERABLE AS ANYONE!
YOU MUST BOTH LEAVE! REMAIN ABOVE WITH GIANT-MAN AND THE WASP! ONLY THOR CAN ENDURE THE INTENSE HEAT WHICH AWAITS BELOW!!

WHO IS RULER OF THE LAVA MEN! TAKE ME TO HIM!
NO STRANGER COMMANDS US! YOU HAVE COME TOO FAR, INSOLENT ONE! SEE HOW WE HEAT THE VERY GROUND BENEATH YOUR FEET, TURNING IT TO LAVA!!

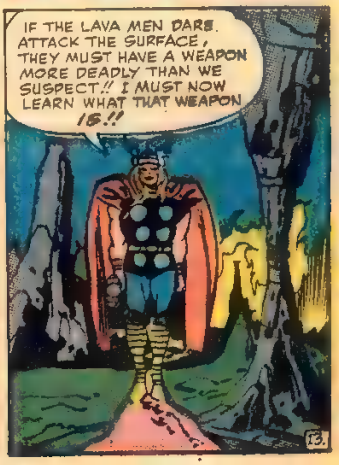
THE GROUND GROWS MOLTEN... IT'S BECOMING SOFT... I'M SINKING INTO IT!

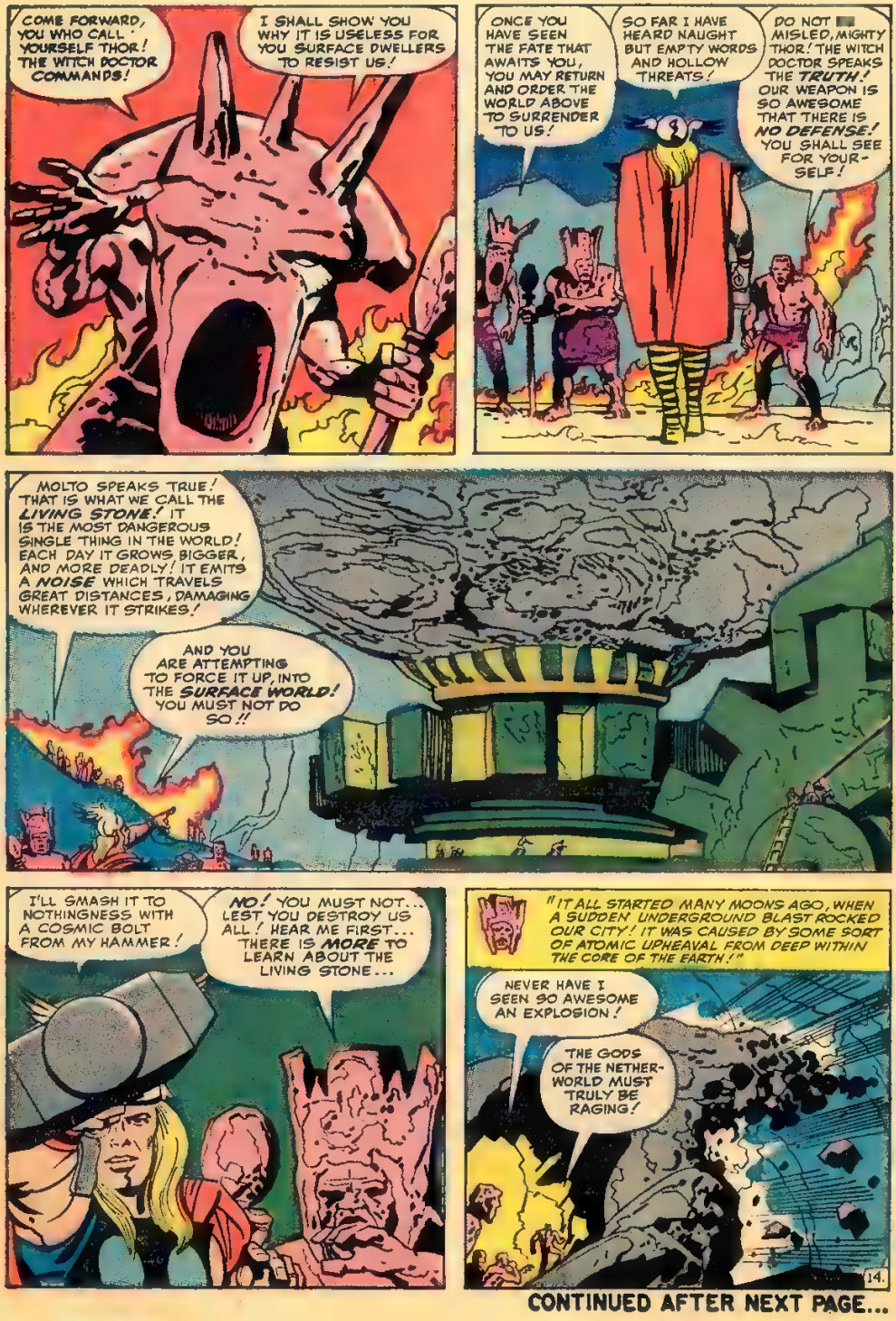

BUT THOR, SON OF ODIN, LORD OF ASGARD, DOES NOT BEG FOR HELP!!

AND THEN, MOLTO APPEARS, AND CRIES...
IT'S THOR! THE ONE WHO DEFEATED ME MONTHS AGO... WHO MERCIFULLY RETURNED ME TO MY PEOPLE! SAVE HIM!
IT IS TOO LATE!


DO NOT FEAR, LAVA MEN! NO HARM SHALL COME TO THOR!!

NOT WHILE MY ENCHANTED HAMMER CAN GENERATE ENOUGH COSMIC POWER TO HARDEN THE MOLTEN LAVA AND LIFT ME UP AGAIN!
RUN! WE MUST WARN THE KING!


IF THE LAVA MEN DARE ATTACK THE SURFACE, THEY MUST HAVE A WEAPON MORE DEADLY THAN WE SUSPECT!! I MUST NOW LEARN WHAT THAT WEAPON IS!!

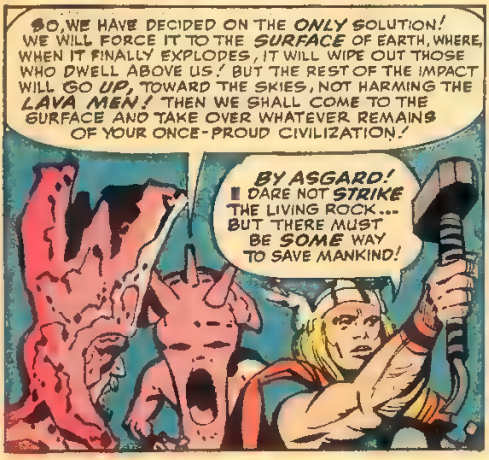

COME FORWARD, YOU WHO CALL YOURSELF THOR! THE WITCH DOCTOR COMMANDS!
I SHALL SHOW YOU WHY IT IS USELESS FOR YOU SURFACE DWELLERS TO RESIST US!
ONCE YOU HAVE SEEN THE FATE THAT AWAITS YOU, YOU MAY RETURN AND ORDER THE WORLD ABOVE TO SURRENDER TO US!
SO FAR I HAVE HEARD NAUGHT BUT EMPTY WORDS AND HOLLOW THREATS!
DO NOT [redacted] MISLED, MIGHTY THOR! THE WITCH DOCTOR SPEAKS THE TRUTH! OUR WEAPON IS SO AWESOME THAT THERE IS NO DEFENSE! YOU SHALL SEE FOR YOURSELF!
MOLTO SPEAKS TRUE! THAT IS WHAT WE CALL THE LIVING STONE! IT IS THE MOST DANGEROUS SINGLE THING IN THE WORLD! EACH DAY IT GROWS BIGGER, AND MORE DEADLY! IT EMITS A NOISE WHICH TRAVELS GREAT DISTANCES, DAMAGING WHEREVER IT STRIKES!
AND YOU ARE ATTEMPTING TO FORCE IT UP, INTO THE SURFACE WORLD! YOU MUST NOT DO SO!!
I'LL SMASH IT TO NOTHINGNESS WITH A COSMIC BOLT FROM MY HAMMER!
NO! YOU MUST NOT... LEST YOU DESTROY US ALL! HEAR ME FIRST... THERE IS MORE TO LEARN ABOUT THE LIVING STONE...
"IT ALL STARTED MANY MOONS AGO, WHEN A SUDDEN UNDERGROUND BLAST ROCKED OUR CITY! IT WAS CAUSED BY SOME SORT OF ATOMIC UPHEAVAL FROM DEEP WITHIN THE CORE OF THE EARTH!"
NEVER HAVE I SEEN SO AWESOME AN EXPLOSION!
THE GODS OF THE NETHER-WORLD MUST TRULY BE RAGING!
14.

CONTINUED AFTER NEXT PAGE...

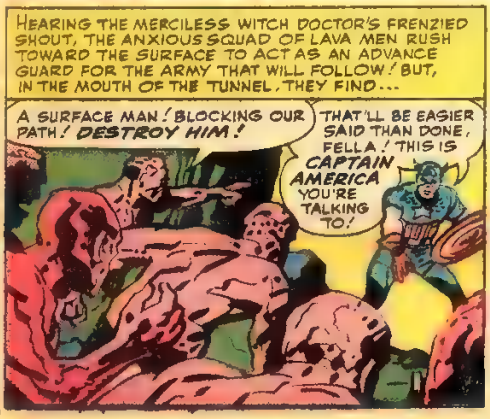
"AS A RESULT OF THE TITANIC BLAST, I FOUND ONE SMALL STRANGE PIECE OF ROCK! IN AN EFFORT TO DETERMINE WHAT IT WAS, WE STRUCK IT WITH ONE OF OUR TOOLS..."
STAND BACK, WHILE I SMASH IT!

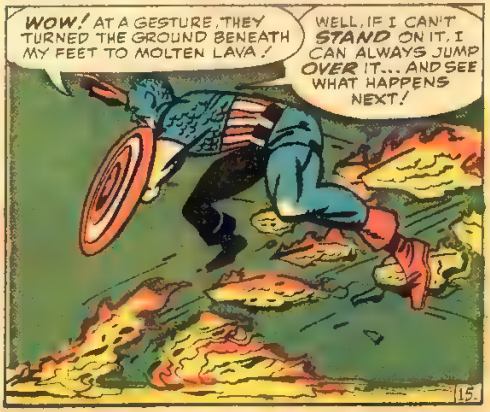
"ALAS, WE LEARNED TO OUR DISMAY THAT ANY IMPACT CAUSED A VIOLENT EXPLOSION! JUST THE SPEEDING SOUND WAVE WHICH RESULTED CAUSED AN ENTIRE DESERTED ISLE IN YOUR PACIFIC OCEAN TO BE BLOWN TO BITS!!"

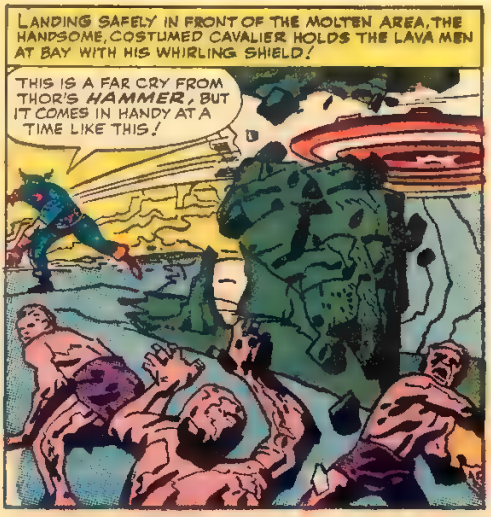
"SINCE THAT DREAD DAY, THE REMAINING FRAGMENT HAS GROWN AND GROWN! IF IT SHOULD EXPLODE NOW, IN ITS PRESENT SIZE, IT COULD SHATTER THE ENTIRE PLANET, DESTROYING BOTH OUR RACES!"

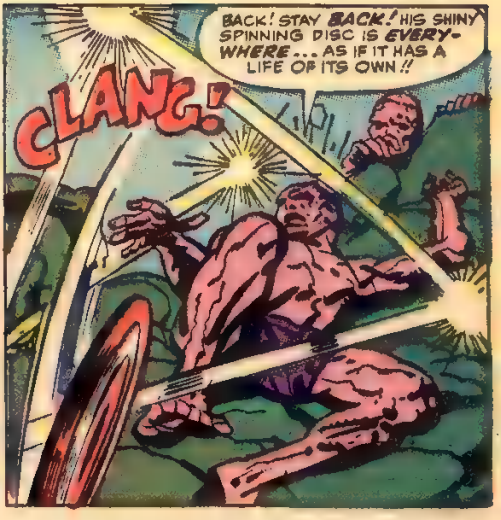

SO, WE HAVE DECIDED ON THE ONLY SOLUTION! WE WILL FORCE IT TO THE SURFACE OF EARTH, WHERE, WHEN IT FINALLY EXPLODES, IT WILL WIPE OUT THOSE WHO DWELL ABOVE US! BUT THE REST OF THE IMPACT WILL GO UP, TOWARD THE SKIES, NOT HARMING THE LAVA MEN! THEN WE SHALL COME TO THE SURFACE AND TAKE OVER WHATEVER REMAINS OF YOUR ONCE-PROUD CIVILIZATION!
BY ASGARD! I DARE NOT STRIKE THE LIVING ROCK... BUT THERE MUST BE SOME WAY TO SAVE MANKIND!

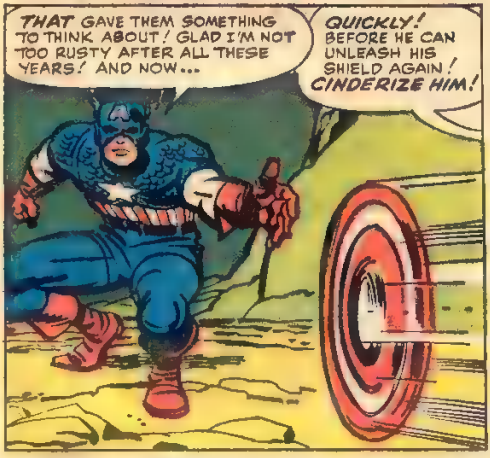
THERE IS NO WAY! YOU HAVE BEATEN US ONCE BEFORE, BUT THIS TIME VICTORY IS OURS! ATTENTION, MEN OF THE LAVA WORLD! THE TIME HAS COME! WE STRIKE FOR VICTORY!

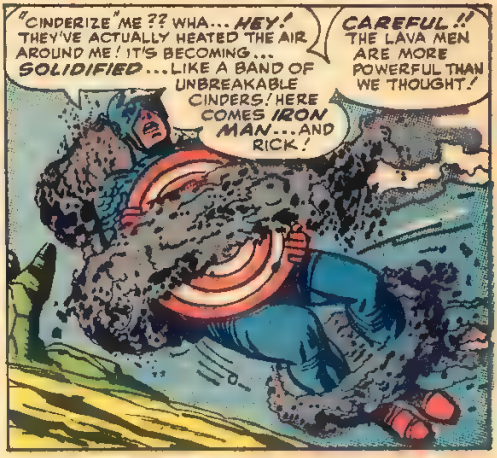

HEARING THE MERCILESS WITCH DOCTOR'S FRENZIED SHOUT, THE ANXIOUS SQUAD OF LAVA MEN RUSH TOWARD THE SURFACE TO ACT AS AN ADVANCE GUARD FOR THE ARMY THAT WILL FOLLOW! BUT, IN THE MOUTH OF THE TUNNEL, THEY FIND...
A SURFACE MAN! BLOCKING OUR PATH! DESTROY HIM!
THAT'LL BE EASIER SAID THAN DONE, FELLA! THIS IS CAPTAIN AMERICA YOU'RE TALKING TO!


WOW! AT A GESTURE, THEY TURNED THE GROUND BENEATH MY FEET TO MOLTEN LAVA!
WELL, IF I CAN'T STAND ON IT, I CAN ALWAYS JUMP OVER IT... AND SEE WHAT HAPPENS NEXT!

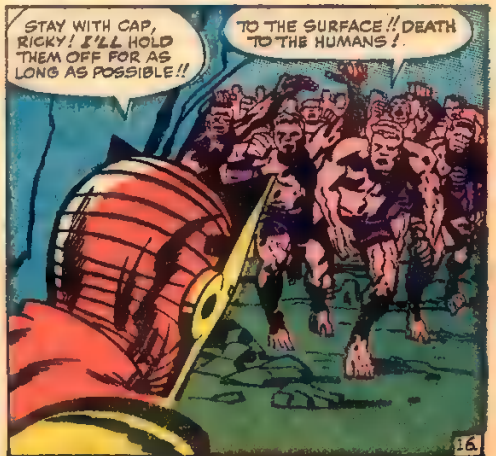

LANDING SAFELY IN FRONT OF THE MOLTEN AREA, THE HANDSOME, COSTUMED CAVALIER HOLDS THE LAVA MEN AT BAY WITH HIS WHIRLING SHIELD!
THIS IS A FAR CRY FROM THOR'S HAMMER, BUT IT COMES IN HANDY AT A TIME LIKE THIS!


BACK! STAY BACK! HIS SHINY SPINNING DISC IS EVERY-WHERE... AS IF IT HAS A LIFE OF ITS OWN!!
CLANG!

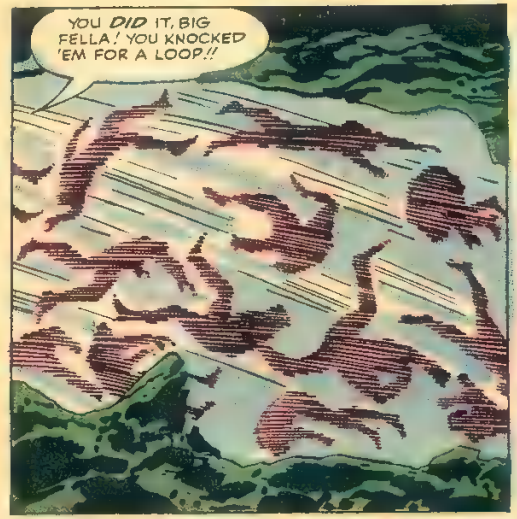

THAT GAVE THEM SOMETHING TO THINK ABOUT! GLAD I'M NOT TOO RUSTY AFTER ALL THESE YEARS! AND NOW...
QUICKLY! BEFORE HE CAN UNLEASH HIS SHIELD AGAIN! CINDERIZE HIM!


"CINDERIZE" ME?? WHA... HEY! THEY'VE ACTUALLY HEATED THE AIR AROUND ME! IT'S BECOMING... SOLIDIFIED... LIKE A BAND OF UNBREAKABLE CINDERS! HERE COMES IRON MAN... AND RICK!
CAREFUL!! THE LAVA MEN ARE MORE POWERFUL THAN WE THOUGHT!

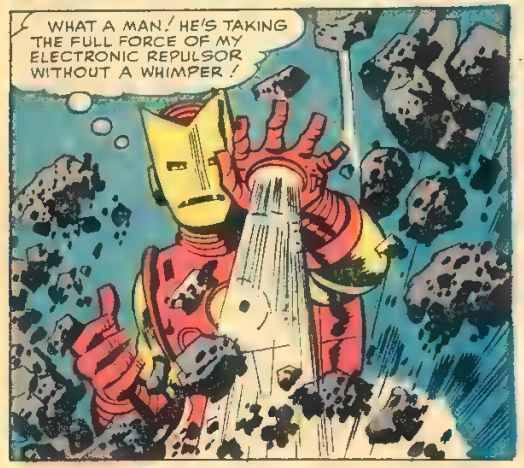
DON'T WORRY ABOUT THEM, CAP! THE AVENGERS ARE REALLY GETTING INTO HIGH GEAR NOW! WE'LL HAVE YOU FREE BEFORE YOU KNOW IT!!
UGH! THIS STUFF IS STRONGER THAN IT LOOKS! AND I HEAR THE LAVA MEN CHARGING TOWARDS US!

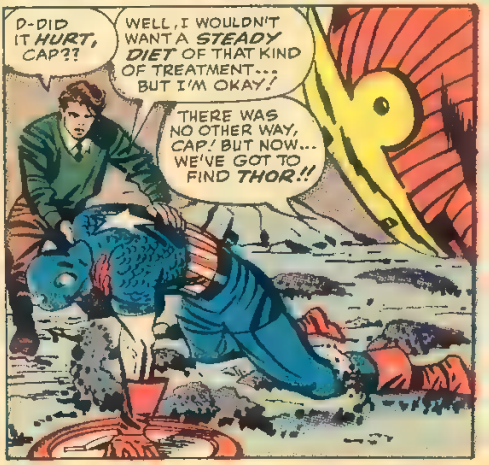

STAY WITH CAP, RICKY! I'LL HOLD THEM OFF FOR AS LONG AS POSSIBLE!!
TO THE SURFACE!! DEATH TO THE HUMANS!

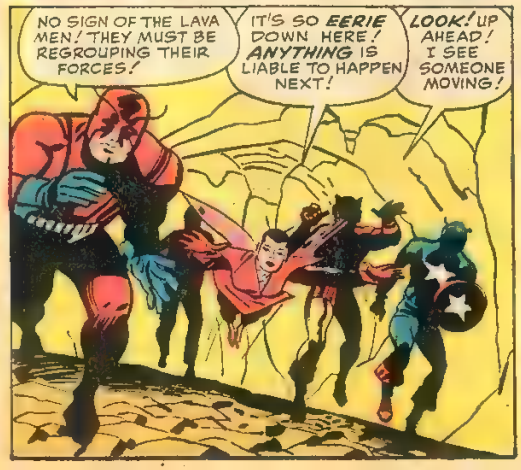
MEANTIME, DIRECTLY ABOVE, AS GENERAL "THUNDERBOLT" ROSS'S MISSILES RING THE LIVING STONE, ANT-MAN AND THE WASP MINUTELY EXAMINE EVERY INCH OF ITS SLOWLY-GROWING SURFACE...
I'VE FOUND IT! ONE SMALL AREA WHICH ISN'T PULSATING! IF A STRONG ENOUGH BLOW COULD STRIKE THIS EXACT SPOT, IT WOULD DESTROY THE ROCK WITHOUT CAUSING A CATACLYSMIC EXPLOSION!
INSTANTLY, THE ANT-SIZED ADVENTURER BECOMES GIANT-MAN, AND THEN...
LET'S GO, WASP! WE'VE GOT TO FIND THOR! ONLY HIS HAMMER HAS THE POWER WE NEED!
I'LL REMAIN WASP-SIZED SO I CAN KEEP UP WITH YOU BY FLYING!
SECONDS LATER...
WHERE'S THOR? WE NEED HIM TO DEMOLISH THE LIVING STONE!
WE'LL HAVE TO GET PAST THE LAVA MEN FIRST! HE'S ON THE OTHER SIDE OF THEM!
C'MON, GIANT-MAN! I CAN'T HOLD THEM BACK FOREVER! MY TRANSISTORS ARE RUNNING DOWN AGAIN!
THEY'RE STARTING TO MELT THE BOULDER I'M USING! HEY! YOU... YOU'RE NOT RUNNING OUT ON ME?!!
BUT THE TOWERING TITAN HAS ONLY RACED TO THE SURFACE LONG ENOUGH TO SEIZE THE AVENGERS' HELICOPTER! THEN, AIDED BY ITS SPINNING ROTARY BLADE, HE LIFTS THE CRAFT OFF THE GROUND, AND...
STEP ASIDE, IRON MAN! YOU'VE DONE YOUR SHARE! NOW I'LL COOL 'EM OFF FOR YOU!!
17.


YOU DID IT, BIG FELLA! YOU KNOCKED 'EM FOR A LOOP!!

AND NOW WE'VE GOT TO FIND THOR!
WILL DO, PARTNER, AS SOON AS I GET CAPTAIN AMERICA FREE OF THOSE SOLIDIFIED CINDERS! THIS IS LIABLE TO HURT, CAP!
DO WHAT YOU HAVE TO, IRON MAN!!


WHAT A MAN! HE'S TAKING THE FULL FORCE OF MY ELECTRONIC REPULSOR WITHOUT A WHIMPER!


D-DID IT HURT, CAP??
WELL, I WOULDN'T WANT A STEADY DIET OF THAT KIND OF TREATMENT... BUT I'M OKAY!
THERE WAS NO OTHER WAY, CAP! BUT NOW... WE'VE GOT TO FIND THOR!!

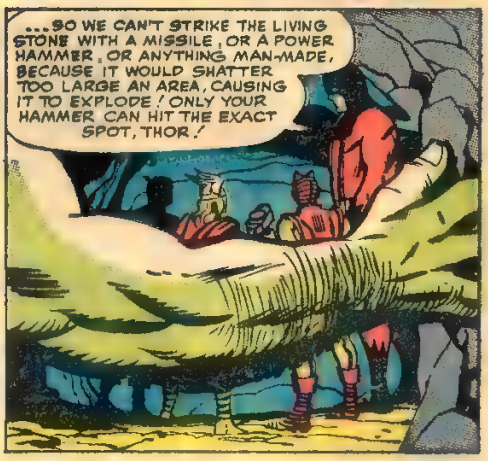

NO SIGN OF THE LAVA MEN! THEY MUST BE REGROUPING THEIR FORCES!
IT'S SO EERIE DOWN HERE! ANYTHING IS LIABLE TO HAPPEN NEXT!
LOOK! UP AHEAD! I SEE SOMEONE MOVING!

IT'S THOR!!
AT LAST WE ARE TOGETHER AGAIN! WE AVENGERS SHALL NEED ALL OUR SKILL AND STRENGTH FOR THE TASK THAT LIES AHEAD!!

MEANWHILE, [illegible] ON THE SURFACE, [illegible] ALSO HAS JUST [illegible] THE MYSTERY OF THE LIVING [illegible]...
IT SENDS SOUND WAVES OVER VAST DISTANCES, REACTING LIKE [illegible] BLASTS [illegible] THEY LAND! IT WILL EVENTUALLY [illegible] ITSELF UP, TAKING HALF THE PLANET WITH IT!!

IT WAS PROBABLY CAUSED BY SOME STRANGE UNDER-GROUND UPHEAVAL WHICH...
WHA...? I'M...I'M CHANGING! IT'S HAPPENING AGAIN! I CAN FEEL IT! NO!!
DON'T LET IT! I MUSTN'T! NOT NOW!

BUT, ONCE THE INCREDIBLE CHANGE BEGINS TO OCCUR TO BRUCE BANNER'S GAMMA-RAY AFFECTED BODY, NOTHING ON EARTH CAN STOP IT! NOTHING ON EARTH CAN PREVENT HIM FROM BECOMING.. [illegible] HULK!!


...SO WE CAN'T STRIKE THE LIVING STONE WITH A MISSILE, OR A POWER HAMMER, OR ANYTHING MAN-MADE, BECAUSE IT WOULD SHATTER TOO LARGE AN AREA, CAUSING IT TO EXPLODE! ONLY YOUR HAMMER CAN HIT THE EXACT SPOT, THOR!

BUT SUDDENLY, THE KEEN EARS OF CAPTAIN AMERICA HEAR THE SOUND OF HEAVY BREATHING, AND...
HOLD IT!! LOOK... BEHIND US!! IT'S HIM AGAIN! IT'S... THE HULK!!
WE'VE GOT TO GET RID OF HIM!

THERE'S NO TIME TO EXPLAIN! THAT LIVING STONE MAY DETONATE ITSELF AT ANY MINUTE!
I'LL SMASH YOU ALL! I'LL FINISH WHAT I STARTED LAST TIME WE MET!
HOLD HIM! DON'T LET HIM GO!
19.

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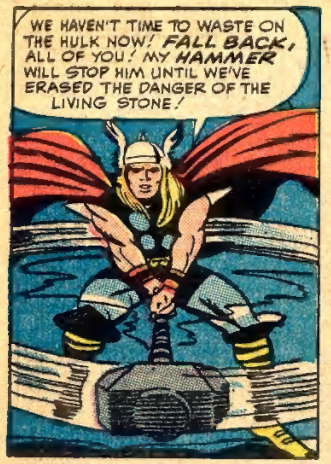
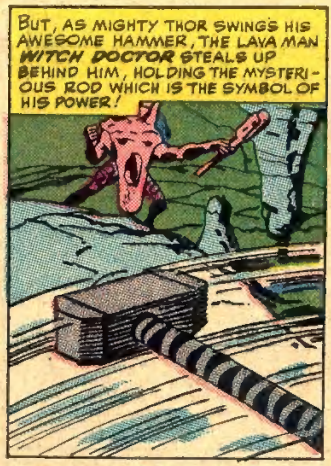
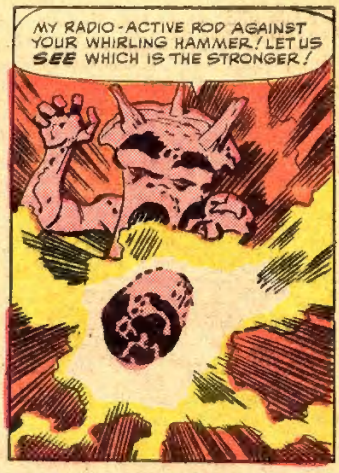
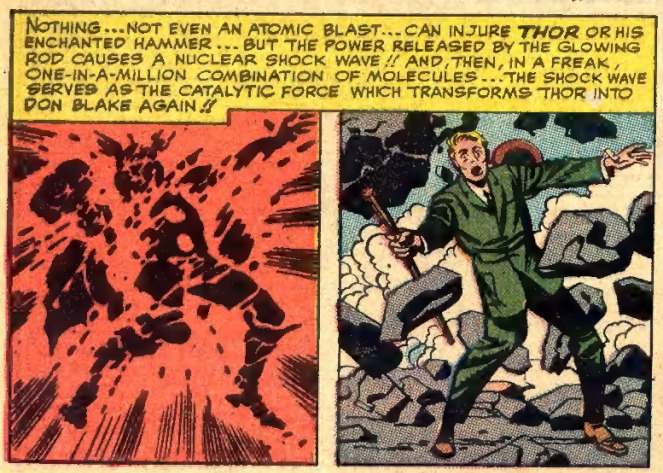
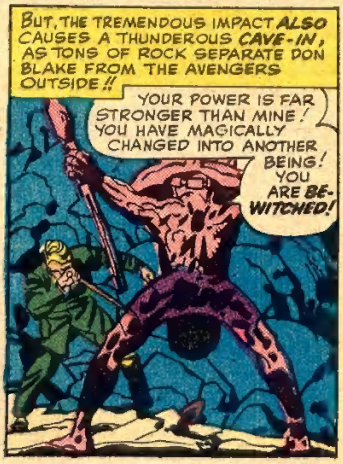

WE HAVEN'T TIME TO WASTE ON THE HULK NOW! FALL BACK, ALL OF YOU! MY HAMMER WILL STOP HIM UNTIL WE'VE ERASED THE DANGER OF THE LIVING STONE!


BUT, AS MIGHTY THOR SWINGS HIS AWESOME HAMMER, THE LAVA MAN WITCH DOCTOR STEALS UP BEHIND HIM, HOLDING THE MYSTERIOUS ROD WHICH IS THE SYMBOL OF HIS POWER!


MY RADIO-ACTIVE ROD AGAINST YOUR WHIRLING HAMMER! LET US SEE WHICH IS THE STRONGER!


NOTHING...NOT EVEN AN ATOMIC BLAST...CAN INJURE THOR OR HIS ENCHANTED HAMMER...BUT THE POWER RELEASED BY THE GLOWING ROD CAUSES A NUCLEAR SHOCK WAVE!! AND, THEN, IN A FREAK, ONE-IN-A-MILLION COMBINATION OF MOLECULES...THE SHOCK WAVE SERVES AS THE CATALYTIC FORCE WHICH TRANSFORMS THOR INTO DON BLAKE AGAIN!!


BUT, THE TREMENDOUS IMPACT ALSO CAUSES A THUNDEROUS CAVE-IN, AS TONS OF ROCK SEPARATE DON BLAKE FROM THE AVENGERS OUTSIDE!!
YOUR POWER IS FAR STRONGER THAN MINE! YOU HAVE MAGICALLY CHANGED INTO ANOTHER BEING! YOU ARE BE-WITCHED!

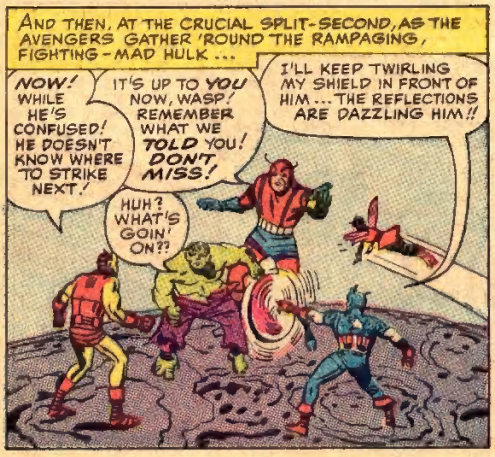
AND, AS THE WITCH DOCTOR FLEES IN MUTE PANIC, THE WEAKENED FORM OF DR. BLAKE SLUMPS AGAINST THE FALLEN ROCKS, TOO WEAK EVEN TO RAISE HIS CANE...
MUST REST...MUST CLOSE MY EYES...STRAIN WAS TOO GREAT...ONLY THOR'S GREAT STRENGTH LET ME SURVIVE THE ORDEAL!

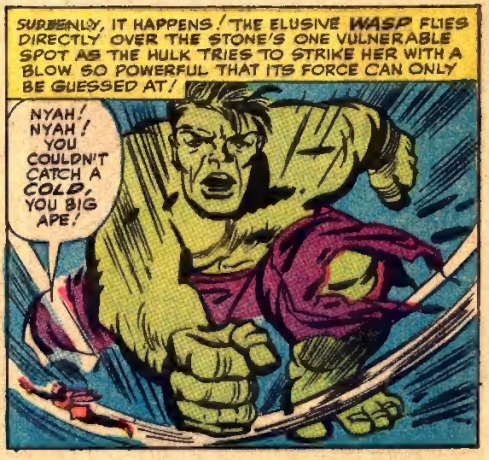
WHILE, ON THE SURFACE, THE LIVING ROCK ALMOST REACHES ITS MAXIMUM SIZE...
IT'LL EXPLODE ANY MINUTE! AND WITHOUT THOR, WE CAN'T DESTROY IT FIRST!
STAY BACK! THE WASP AND I HAVE A PLAN!
IT WAS CAPTAIN AMERICA'S IDEA! IT'S A LONG CHANCE.. BUT IT MIGHT WORK!
THAT'S IT! LET THE HULK CLIMB A BIT FURTHER! NOW... NOW IS THE TIME!

THIS REQUIRES PERFECT TIMING! I'VE GOT TO LURE HIM TO THE EXACT SPOT! HE'S ABOUT TO SWING.. NOW FOR A SHRINKING PILL!!

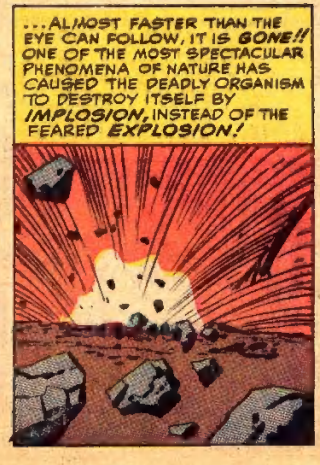
WHOOSH!

NOW FOR A GROWTH PILL! AHH...PERFECT!
THOSE TRICKS WON'T HELP YOU FOR LONG!


AND THEN, AT THE CRUCIAL SPLIT-SECOND, AS THE AVENGERS GATHER 'ROUND THE RAMPAGING, FIGHTING-MAD HULK ...
NOW! WHILE HE'S CONFUSED! HE DOESN'T KNOW WHERE TO STRIKE NEXT!
IT'S UP TO YOU NOW, WASP! REMEMBER WHAT WE TOLD YOU! DON'T MISS!
I'LL KEEP TWIRLING MY SHIELD IN FRONT OF HIM ... THE REFLECTIONS ARE DAZZLING HIM!!
HUH? WHAT'S GOIN' ON??


SUDDENLY, IT HAPPENS! THE ELUSIVE WASP FLIES DIRECTLY OVER THE STONE'S ONE VULNERABLE SPOT AS THE HULK TRIES TO STRIKE HER WITH A BLOW SO POWERFUL THAT ITS FORCE CAN ONLY BE GUESSED AT!
NYAH! NYAH! YOU COULDN'T CATCH A COLD, YOU BIG APE!

AND SO, UNWITTINGLY, THE INCREDIBLE HULK HAS DONE WHAT NO OTHER POWER SAVE THOR'S HAMMER COULD HAVE DONE! BEFORE ANOTHER SECOND ELAPSES, THE LIVING STONE BEGINS TO GLOW WITH A SHIMMERING LIGHT AS IT SUDDENLY SWELLS, AND THEN ...


...ALMOST FASTER THAN THE EYE CAN FOLLOW, IT IS GONE!! ONE OF THE MOST SPECTACULAR PHENOMENA OF NATURE HAS CAUSED THE DEADLY ORGANISM TO DESTROY ITSELF BY IMPLOSION, INSTEAD OF THE FEARED EXPLOSION!

WHILE BENEATH THE SURFACE, HEARING THE DEAFENING SOUND, DON BLAKE SUMMONS HIS LAST REMAINING VESTIGE OF STRENGTH...
I MUST POUND MY CANE! I MUST BECOME MIGHTY THOR AGAIN, BEFORE IT'S TOO LATE!!

AND, THOUGH HIS MORTAL FLESH IS WEAK, HIS SPIRIT... HIS IRON WILL... ARE STILL THOSE OF THE MIGHTY THUNDER GOD, AND SO...
I'VE DONE IT!!
NOW TO BE SURE THE LAVA MEN NEVER AGAIN MENACE THE SURFACE WORLD!
HEAR THE WORDS OF THOR, MEN OF THE NETHERWORLD! THE SURFACE MEN ARE NOT YOUR ENEMIES! THEY ONLY DESIRE TO LIVE IN PEACE! BUT, IF YOU EVER AGAIN THREATEN THEIR EXISTENCE, THEY WILL FIGHT TO THE END WITH WEAPONS OF MORE POWER THAN YOU CAN IMAGINE... AND WITH THE AVENGERS AT THEIR SIDE!!
NOW RETURN TO YOUR HOMES, TO YOUR NORMAL LIVES! FOR OUR MERCY IS THE EQUAL OF OUR STRENGTH!
IT IS OVER! THE THREAT OF THE LAVA MEN IS ENDED! NOW, IF ONLY THE OTHERS HAVE BEEN ABLE TO DESTROY THE LIVING STONE...
AND, BACK ON THE SURFACE...
ORDER THE MISSILES REMOVED FROM STANDBY ALERT, MAJOR! THE DANGER IS OVER!
YES, SIR, GENERAL! LOOKS LIKE THE AVENGERS PREVENTED A SHOOTING WAR!
BUT WHAT HAPPENED TO BRUCE BANNER? THE LAST I SAW, HE WAS INSPECTING THE LIVING STONE!
GET THOSE MEN BACK TO THEIR STATIONS! NOTIFY THE PENTAGON THE EMERGENCY IS OVER! LOOK ALIVE THERE!
I'VE GOT TO FIND BRUCE! THE HULK HAS DISAPPEARED! IF THEY SHOULD RUN INTO EACH OTHER, ANYTHING MIGHT HAPPEN!!
MEANWHILE, ON THE SITE WHERE THE LIVING STONE HAD BEEN BUT SECONDS BEFORE...
THE HULK IS GONE! BUT WE'RE ALL SAFE!
IT'S AMAZING! THE FORCE OF THE GREAT IMPLOSION TRANSMUTED THE GROUND BELOW US INTO A SHEET OF GLASS!
WELL, THAT WRAPS IT UP! FUNNY... IT'S ALWAYS SOMEWHAT OF A LET-DOWN WHEN A BATTLE IS OVER!
I SUSPECT THIS BATTLE ISN'T FULLY ENDED! THE HULK ESCAPED DURING THE IMPLOSION... BUT WE'RE SURE TO MEET HIM AGAIN!
SAY! WHAT ABOUT THOR? WHERE IS HE?
22.

THEN, AS IF IN ANSWER TO IRON MAN'S QUESTION...
NOW TO REJOIN THE OTHERS... AND TO SEAL THIS OPENING SO THE LAVA MEN REMAIN BELOW!
HERE'S THOR NOW! HI, PARTNER! WE WERE WONDERING ABOUT YOU...!
THE LIVING ROCK! YOU'VE DESTROYED IT?!!
YES! WHEN YOU WEREN'T HERE WITH YOUR HAMMER WE TRICKED THE HULK INTO STRIKING ITS ONE VULNERABLE SPOT WITH THAT SLEDGE-HAMMER FIST OF HIS! AND THAT DID IT!
ODD HOW FATE ARRANGED FOR THE HULK TO UNWITTINGLY COME TO THE AID OF MANKIND!
I'M PROUD OF YOU, WASP!! YOUR TIMING WAS PERFECT, JUST WHEN IT COUNTED THE MOST!
I'D RATHER YOU WERE IMPRESSED BY MY BLUSHING BEAUTY, BUT I GUESS ANY COMPLIMENT IS BETTER THAN NONE!
AND JUST A SHORT DISTANCE AWAY...
THERE'S SOMEONE ON THE GROUND... JUST AHEAD! IT'S BRUCE!! BUT... WHAT HAPPENED TO HIM??!
OH, BRUCE... MY DARLING! YOU'VE BEEN HURT! WHO DID IT? WAS IT... THE HULK?? DID HE DO THIS TO YOU??
"THE HULK?? YES... YOU MIGHT SAY SO!!
BUT DON'T WORRY, BETTY! THE HULK IS... GONE... FOR NOW!
IT'S ALL BEEN LIKE A NIGHTMARE! BUT IT'S OVER AT LAST... THANKS TO THOSE WONDERFUL AVENGERS!
BUT, AS "THOSE WONDERFUL AVENGERS" NEAR THEIR HELICOPTER, FOR THEIR RETURN TRIP TO NEW YORK...
A MESSAGE JUST CAME IN OVER THE WHIRLEYBIRD'S RADIO! I COPIED IT DOWN FOR YOU!
IT'S FROM THE TEEN BRIGADE! IT'S A "CONDITION RED" EMERGENCY!
WELL, WHAT ARE WE WAITING FOR?!
LET'S GO!!
NEXT ISH WE PROMISE YOU MORE STARTLING SURPRISES WITH THE WORLD'S MIGHTIEST SUPER-TEAM, AS WELL AS ALL THE ACTION AND DRAMA YOU'VE LEARNED TO EXPECT FROM THE AWARD-WINNING MARVEL COMICS GROUP! DON'T MISS THE AVENGERS, #6... SEE YOU THEN!
The End
23.

NOTE: DON'T MISS OUR NEW "LETTERS SECTION" ON THE FOLLOWING PG. ➡